

The news is sent out earlier as I am on my way to Lesotho

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 6 AUGUST 2017

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

You may tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings, at 08:15 Central African Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Central African Time in English, on HF as well as on many VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. Echolink listeners may connect to ZS0JPL for a relay. A podcast is available from the League's web site.

This audio bulletin may be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za where you will find this as well as previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you may sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

We start our bulletin with news of a silent key

It is with deep regret that the Boland Amateur Radio Club announces that the key of Joe Haarhoff, ZS1AAB, went silent on Friday 4 August.

We extend our sincere condolences to his wife Rina, his son Bennie, ZS1GX, their family and friends.

PAUSE

In the news today,

THE SARL HF PHONE CONTEST THIS AFTERNOON

THE SARL YL SPRINT ON WEDNESDAY

and

DATE CHANGE FOR THE ZS9V ROBBEN ISLAND DXPEDITION

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

SARL HF PHONE CONTEST THIS AFTERNOON

The first of the three SARL HF Contests, the HF Phone Contest, is on the air this afternoon from 13:00 to 16:30 UTC with activity on 20, 40 and 80 metres. See how many zones you can work per band and how many stations on all three bands. You can participate as a single operator single band station, a single operator all band station, a multi operator single band station or a multi operator all band station. Individual competitors and club stations are encouraged to compete. The exchange is a RS report and a consecutive serial number starting at 001.

There are three SARL trophies up for grabs in the phone contest, but you stand a chance to win more trophies if you participate in all three contests. The rules

are too long to publish in SARL News, so look on page 34 of the 2017 SARL Blue Book for all the information. Do it before the contest starts.

ANNUAL YOTA 2017 SUMMER EVENT

Yesterday Saturday 05 August, the annual IARU Region 1 Youngsters on the Air (YOTA) event kicked off with 80 youngsters from 30 different IARU Region 1 Member Societies including a team from Japan. The YOTA week is being hosted by the RSGB and the event takes place at Gilwell Park, Chingford, Waltham Abbey, London, the headquarters of UK Scouting.

The youngsters will be having fun with amateur radio, enjoying workshops, optimising their skills in electronics with kit construction and antenna building, SOTA activations, direction finding, and making many new international friends during the famous inter-cultural evening where everyone brings food and drinks from their home countries. With excursions to Bletchley Park, the National Radio Centre and the Science Museum in London, it is certainly going to be an eventful week.

On Tuesday evening 8 August, the youngster will have an opportunity to talk to astronaut Paulo Nespoli, IZ0JPA, on the International Space Station using amateur radio. The ISS contact will provide the youngsters with an unforgettable experience in space communications via amateur radio.

If you would like to have a QSO with one of the youngsters, listen out for the multi-station special event station GB17YOTA which will be on air 24/7 on most bands using several different modes.

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE YL SPRINT

This is a fun activity to celebrate National Women's Day between radio amateurs in South Africa, and takes place on Wednesday 9 August 2017 from 09:00 to 10:00 UTC. Call "YL Sprint!" It is a phone sprint on the 40-metre band using 7 063 to 7 100 and 7 130 to 7 200 kHz. The exchange is a RS report and YL or OM.

Contacts between YL stations are worth 5 points, contacts between YL and OM stations are worth 3 points and contacts between OM stations are worth 1 point. Logs, in ADIF, Cabrillo or MS Excel format and labelled "your call sign YL Sprint," must be submitted by e-mail to zs4bfm@mweb.co.za by 16 August 2017.

DATE CHANGE FOR THE ZS9V ROBBEN ISLAND DXPEDITION

SARL News has been informed that due to a series of unexpected complications, the 2017 ZS9V Robben Island DXpedition has been moved from 9 to 13 August to the International Lighthouse weekend of 19 and 20 August. The team will be running two SSB stations, one will be capable of at least 20, 15 and 10 m operation and the other of at least 80 and 40 m operation. Further information on the DXpedition will be published on www.zs9v.org.za as it becomes available.

AMSATSA/SARL WORKSHOP TO FOCUS ON TAKING SDR TO A NEW LEVEL

The AMSAT SA/SARL workshop, to be held on Saturday 19 August at the SARL National Amateur Radio Centre at Radiokop Roodepoort, will focus on how to get more out of Software Defined Radio, and will take participants to another level in Amateur Radio activity.

The workshop will be presented in two sessions. Session one will deal with the VHF SDR dongle and how to have more fun, such as listening to satellites, receiving weather satellites pictures, and astronomy projects. The second session will discuss a HF Dongle and the SARL HF Noise floor monitoring project, with details and a demonstration of how to automate this and how to build an autonomous system using a raspberry Pi.

For more details and to check your registration status, point your browser to www.amsatsa.org.za or send an e-mail to admin@amsatsa.org.za

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

AUGUST 2017 RADIO ZS

The August 2017 issue of Radio ZS has been available for download since 30 July. Sam, ZS1SAM, is looking for volunteers to help with the maritime mobile net. To help your thought process for the Radio ZS Antenna Design Competition, there are two articles to read. Hannes, ZS6BZP, discusses the Double-Delta Loop Receive Antenna for the Low Bands, a Design Idea, and David, G4DHF, shows you his Ultra-portable 5 element 144 MHz Pocket Portable Yagi. Mike, ZS2FM, tells about amateur radio between the two World Wars and you can read about Louis, G5RV, and his war service in the Museum Piece. There is more in this 52-page issue.

The closing date for your article for the September Radio ZS is Saturday 26 August and you can send it to radiozs@sarl.org.za. The editor is also looking for photographs for the front cover, which must be in portrait format.

BEACON NEWS

This week saw the full activation of two new Manned Experimental Propagation Tests (MEPT) beacons in divisions three and four. Firstly, Dennis Green activated ZS4BFN but switched to his own callsign ZS4BS after a few hours. Dennis has already been spotted on 60 metres in most divisions as well as some DX spots on 40 and 20 m. The second beacon was activated by Pieter Gaybba, ZS3PG, at Vanderkloof under the callsign ZS3ZU. He was recently spotted 10 045 km away on 250 mW by SM4GRP in Sweden. A huge thank you to these amateurs for their contributions to the propagation project.

Amateurs who would like to assist the Beaconeers, especially from division two, can contact Leon Uys, ZR6LU, on e-mail at leonuys@gmail.com or WhatsApp on 082 573 5580.

DIGITAL MOBILE RADIO WORKSHOP

The SA Digital Repeater Sub-Committee (SADRS) is running an event at the National Amateur Radio Centre from 10:00 to 17:00 CAT on Saturday 26 August 2017. This is a free event for SARL members and kits will be available for purchase.

The programme is as follows: 10:00 Welcome and talk about the BrandMeister DMR, D-Star and the Fusion Master Server by Andy Coetzee, ZS5CEY 11:00 Tea Break 11:15 The MMDVM Homebrew Building Project by Johan Lehmann, ZS6JPL, and Ronald Verweerd, ZS6RVC 12:15 Lunch - Steak rolls and refreshments 13:30 The MMDVM Hotpots projects and Different Digital Radios - Tytera MD2017 DMR Dual Band Radio, etc., by Marinus Brand, ZS6BM, and Andy Coetzee, ZS5CEY 15:00 Practical MMDVM Demonstration and building. 17:00 End of the event.

SOLAR CYCLE 24

Jim Kennedy, KH6/K6MIO reports that the current Solar Cycle 24 continues its downward trend. For several years now, the Sun's northern and southern hemispheres continue to have separate minds about their relative rates of descent. The southern hemisphere index is now rather close to zero, while the northern index, though tracking downward, has started from a higher level.

In the meantime, during March 2017, there were no sunspots for 16 days in either hemisphere. There was a total of 23 days with fewer than 30 daily sunspots. All the indications are that we will be seeing even longer periods of blank Sun over the next few years. There continue to be expectations that the upcoming Cycle 25 will be noticeably weaker than Cycle 24. It seems likely that, when it does clearly begin to move upward from the probably long minimum, it will be slow in rising.

It is interesting to compare Cycle 12 (1878 - 1890) with Cycle 24. Although Cycle 12 was somewhat weaker than Cycle 24, it shows a lot of the same general characteristics of Cycle 24 rise and fall profile. It is reasonable to think that the official Cycle 24 minimum will occur sometime in 2020 or 2021. Many solar professionals are predicting Cycle 25 to have an overall maximum in the 60s. That would be nearly half of Cycle 24 maximum.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. There is currently only a single sunspot visible which poses little threat for solar flares. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around six. The 20 and 30 m bands will provide lots of DX fun. 60 m will be the best band during day time for shorter distances, and local contacts. Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

Finally, a diary of some upcoming events:

5 to 12 August the Region 1 YOTA Summer Camp with call sign GB17YOTA
Today the SARL HF phone contest 9 August the SARL YL Sprint 13 August
closing date for the HF Phone contest logs 16 August closing date for the
YL Sprint logs 19 August SDR Workshop at the NARC 19 and 20 August
International Lighthouse Weekend and the ZS9V DXpedition 20 August the
SARL HF Digital Contest 26 August DMR Workshop at the NARC and the
closing date for the September Radio ZS 27 August the SARL HF CW Contest

To conclude our bulletin, a quick overview of our main news item:

The first of the three SARL HF Contests, the HF Phone Contest is on the air this afternoon from 13:00 to 16:30 UTC with activity on 20, 40 and 80 metres. See how many zones you can work per band and how many stations on all three bands. You can participate as a single operator single band station, a single operator all band station, a multi operator single band station or a multi operator all band station. Individual competitors and club stations are encouraged to compete. The exchange is a RS report and a consecutive serial number starting at 001.

This brings us to the end of this bulletin.

Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 3230 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, 7P8DG, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR, and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

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